

Eduardo Padilla

Everything started in the summer of 2003. I remember going to have my pictures taken for a thing called a passport and a visa. I was only seven at the time and didn't know what was happening, just my mom telling me to be ready for traveling to the most beautiful place on earth—paradise, she said.

Still, I didn't know what was happening. We didn't have any tickets or any money to start a trip anywhere, but there it was, the great excuse for coming to the United States for the first time. It was something called "Internship" that my aunt Eli was going to do. My mom and my grandma were really excited for it to happen, but I still didn't know why we had to go.

Years passed, and that trip one day became the basis of my spiritual education. It was three years of leaving everything behind us, as a family, just to follow the desire of my mother of having her daughter and sons learn about the gospel, and to be prepared for a plan God had for us. One of those desires that had been waiting for 13 years was the same that my aunt Eli had, The Book of Mormon Internship.

In September 2015, we were on our way to one of the Christmas celebrations in Mexico City. My mom had a question for me that had popped into her mind in that very moment, "Are you applying for the Internship this year?"

All my plans changed in that very second. It wasn't that I didn't want to do it, but I was so insecure, I didn't want to lose any time of college, and I wanted to be done with my career as soon as possible. There was only one thing I could do at that moment, pray.

I might have prayed about it twice. I really wasn't interested in losing time from school, but still, I knew that the application deadline was very soon if I was going to change my mind. I was running out of time to decide.

One day in January, I was sitting at the school cafe, and a voice came into my mind and said that I had to call The Book of Mormon Foundation in that very moment. I took out my phone and looked for the Foundation's number, and I called. A woman answered my question on how to apply, and after having the information, I started to gather everything I needed to apply. I wrote my testimony, called people I knew to get my recommendation letters, and everything was ready.

One day, Eldon Anderson, called me and scheduled an appointment to have my interview on a Saturday morning, via Skype. I was nervous because I hadn't spoken any English for a little over a year and a half but I remained faithful. As I was answering all the questions the board asked me, I realized I had good fluency, and the words I needed to say just came into my mouth. After it ended, I felt so confident of the result, and all that was left for me was to wait for them to tell me if I had been accepted or not.

The next day, I was having coffee with my best friend, and as we were talking about my interview, my phone started ringing. It was a call from Independence, Missouri. I answered, and it was Eldon telling me that I was going to be a part of the 2016 generation of interns!